NATURAL NEWS

The Field Museum
Exploring
The Earth And Its
People

December 13, 1996

UNDERPASS SECURITY INCREASED

Good news for staff using the underpass from the Museum to Michigan Avenue and the Metra station! In response to concerns expressed by staff from all three museums, we were recently informed by the Chicago Police Department, 1st District Neigborhood Relations Office, that a police officer has been permanently assigned to the underpass from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., and 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., effective December 6, 1996. For now, this will be a Monday through Friday post only, but plans are in the works to extend coverage to the weekends as well. Long-range plans call for a Museum Campus patrol car as well.

In addition, for Metra users, at the urging of the 1st District Neighborhood Relations Office temporary lights will be installed on the east side of the wooden footbridge to the station within the week, to be followed by permanent lights. District Commander Patrick McNulty and Neighborhood Relations Sergeant Jim Paoletti and his staff have been very responsive and supportive of our concerns. We appreciate their help and support.

Ron Cundiff

NORTH LOT PARKING REMAINS THROUGH JANUARY

Hooray! The north lot is still ours to use through January. We will also have the use of the parking lanes of old Lake Shore Drive during this time period. We anticipate that this space will be more than adequate for the needs of the Museum Campus. Therefore, NO monthly passes will be issued for the month of January. Further information will be published as it is updated, and a larger-scale communication by the Museum's Task Force on parking is planned for January.

DO YOU *LIKE* VOICE MAIL?

Choose one:

✔ **Yes!** If you fall into this category, gosh darn it, move yer' bloomin' messages out of the system after listening. It's as easy as pressing 76#. If in doubt, call **Pat Phillips** (x216). Pat is a *truly kind* person who won't tell a soul if you are technologically comfy with the Flintstones.

☹ No! OK, here's how you crash the system. Go away for the holidays and get a whole bunch of people to call you. Don't leave your password with anyone and don't call in to retrieve and erase. Then the *whole* system will crash and *no one* will be able to use it! Fun for all for the holidays.

CENTER FOR CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND CHANGE

Jon Rogers, anthropology student at the University of Illinois at Chicago, accompanied Assistant Curator **Chap Kusimba** on his field trip to Kenya this past summer. While there he conducted independent ethnographic research on the people of Mtwapa. We are pleased to have him present a slide lecture on his experiences, "Among the People of Mtwapa," Wednesday, December 18, 1996, Lecture Hall II, 11:00 a.m. Please join us.

CENTER FOR EVOLUTIONARY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BIOLOGY

PATTERSON CAPTURES THE ELUSIVE AQUATIC TENREC

MacArthur Curator **Bruce Patterson** (Zoology) recently returned from Madagascar field work, having succeeded in capturing the aquatic tenrec *Limnogale mergulus*. The aquatic tenrec is the only known species that had eluded capture by Field Biologist **Steve Goodman** (Zoology) during his remarkable surveys on the island 1990-1996, and represents a new genus for the Field Museum collections. The specimen will immediately figure in phylogenetic studies by University of Chicago graduate student **Link Olson** and comparative studies by Patterson. A five-minute film of the living Limnogale, never previously photographed, will premiere at 5:30 pm Friday in the Zoology Classroom.

NOON BALLOON

The Noon Balloon presentation for Tuesday December 10, 1996 was delivered by Mikhail Fedonkin, Paleontological Institute, Museum of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, and Visiting Scientist, Department of Geology, Field Museum. Fedonkin discussed the origin of metazoa with special emphasis on the aquatic fauna of the Vendian, about 620 mya -570 mya. He described many spectacular taxa representative of this fauna. Vendian metazoans were hypothesized to have originated in cooler, more highly oxygenated shallow waters that were considered marginal for the previously dominant bacterial and cyanobacterial communities of Precambrian time.

FIELD MUSEUM FAN MAIL

I am writing to thank your office for some much-needed assistance earlier this week. On Wednesday, I came to the Field from Iowa City to pick up several objects on loan to my museum. On leaving, I found the battery to my van had died. Several of the people in engineering and security were extremely helpful in getting the van jump-started and I just wanted to express my gratitude to them... Thanks very much for your help!

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I remember the Museum of Natural History as a staid old landmark which we enjoyed as kids with our parents - once or twice. My recollection is row upon row of glass display cases, housing

FOOD SERVICE SURVEY

In an effort to assess our food services here at Field Museum and ensure that we are addressing the concerns of the staff, we are inviting your feedback using the survey form below.

Please complete the survey and *return to Jim Lowers in the Special Events office, ext. 888* by Wednesday, December 18. If you wish to evaluate each food service, please photocopy the form below for the second service. We appreciate your prompt response and your efforts to help us in this evaluation. Thanks!

Quality, Service and Cleanliness Survey

Restaurant: (circle one)

Picnic in the Field **McDonald's**

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Please rate the following using a 1-10 scale, 10 being the best.

Quality:

A: Overall appearance of food _____

B: Sandwiches _____

C: Fries _____

D: Beverages _____

E: Overall taste of food _____

Service:

A: Overall courtesy ("Thank you; come again", etc) _____

B: Speed of Service _____

Cleanliness:

A: Overall Appearance _____

Overall Rating (1-10): _____

Additional comments would be appreciated:

all kinds of historical relics - mummies, mammals, early civilization.

Most recently, I was with the XXX Association social event... - dinner, dancing, African dancers, catered food, drinks, face painting, palm readers. Of greatest impression to me was the Safari Scavenger Hunt. What a fun, novel way to experience a continuing landmark in the city! Your staff should be commended for such creative work to keep history alive for all ages. I found myself drawn into a self guided tour of the high points of the displays - only to be drawn further into many facts about native American Indians, mammals, the Pacific Islands (and geological study), Africa into the Egyptian tomb, and finally on to the exhibit of gems. What creative, alive, and meaningful presentations of a wealth of material.

I found myself swept into memories of world travels, experiencing such realism and depth of information. Upon reflection, the Field Museum is vibrant and contains a wealth of treasures that will be enjoyed for generations to come.

Congratulations to everyone who has had a part in this rejuvenation. You have given us a fresh look at a relic in our time!! Thanks for the hard work.

An excitement was present throughout the evening, including security and custodial staff in the building. You have a great organization that will be a valuable asset to many generations. I appreciate the opportunity to see such a treasure and look forward to visiting again with family and friends.

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I write to tell you about a very difficult situation that arose last week and was handled superlatively by **Laurie Sanders** and other members of your staff.

I was the featured speaker to over 900 educators... My talk depended upon the slides, and it was clear that an ordinary projector and screen would not work in your giant central atrium. I felt that there was a significant chance that the whole evening would be ruined.

At that moment, Laurie came to the rescue. She arranged for the talk to be given in your 900-seat theater. She arranged for slides to be shown, and was aided in this by an extremely helpful man, who, I believe, was named Edward. Knowing that there was another talk scheduled at the same time in a neighboring room, Laurie arranged for the entire group of 900 people to take an escorted, alternative route so as not to disturb others gathered that evening at the Museum. She also arranged for the tables to move at separate times to avoid a glut of bodies. She then made a series of announcements to the gathering which explained the new arrangements; and she saw that they were carried through perfectly. The result was an excellent evening.

I know from all too many personal experiences that this kind of competence and professionalism is very rare. Many would have said "this is not my gathering," or "this is not in my job description." Every one of the Museum staff with whom I came into contact was helpful. I am greatly in your (and their) debt.

EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES
December 1996

Valerie Gardner	Visitor Services	5 years
Daniel Miller	Zoology	5 years
Mark Westneat	Zoology	5 years
Katie Davis	Visitor Services	10 years
Peyton Fawcett	Library	40 years

WELCOME! Staff Members who started at the Museum in November

Jeremiah Nimene	Security	Security Officer	322
Christine Ochoa	Housekeeping	Housekeeper	371
Amy Perrecone	Accounting	Weekend Cashier	535
Eddie Redwood	Housekeeping	Housekeeper	371
Robin Wagner	Museum Affairs	Projects Coordinator	245

GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK... Staff Members who left in November

Craig Atkinson	Anthropology	Conservation Assistant
Howard Bezin	Exhibits	Lighting Technician
Steve Borysewicz	Exhibits	Developer
William Denton	Housekeeping	Housekeeper
Norann Miller	Zoology	Administrative Assistant
Richard Quinn	Institutional Adv.	Assistant to the Vice President
Phyllis Rabineau	Exhibits	Senior Developer
Diane A. White	Photography	Photographer

The *Natural News* is edited by **Carolyn Klyce** in the President's Office. The deadline for all submissions -- in WordPerfect on floppy disk or via email to klyce@fmppr.fmnh.org -- is Tuesday at noon. Printed on recycled paper.